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**Acknowledgments**

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) recognizes and acknowledges First Unitarian Society of Schenectady for their work in developing a Safe Congregation Policy and sharing their policy as the basis for the First UU policy. It is our hope that other congregations will find this document to be well developed and useful for establishing their own policies.

## **1. Purpose and Philosophy**

Our commitment, as Unitarian Universalists, to the inherent worth and dignity of every person and to justice and compassion, compel us to work towards creating a safe and nurturing environment that protects children and adults from harm and promotes their spiritual growth while part of our community. Additionally, we affirm our commitment to maintain an environment free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, national origin, economic status, age, physical ability, gender/transgender, or sexual/affectional orientation. We pledge to conduct ourselves in a manner that conveys mutual respect and consideration.

Openness to a wide variety of individuals is one of the prime values held by our congregation and expressed in our denomination's purposes and principles. Our goal is to create a caring community that provides an opportunity for people to feel valued, safe, and secure. However, when any person's physical, sexual, or emotional well-being, or freedom to safely express their beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly. To that end, this congregation accepts responsibility to educate itself and our children, in an age-appropriate way, about sexual misconduct, abuse, molestation, harassment, and exploitation. We pledge to do our best to protect and support those who come to us either at risk or in crisis.

A variety of potential dangers are inherent in operating a congregation. These include physical site (including buildings and grounds), medical emergency, operation of the Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) program, transportation and supervision of children off-site, and instances of inappropriate and/or unlawful behavior involving members, friends, visitors, and/or staff of the congregation, as well as protecting First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) from ethical and legal liability.

Events and societal trends have prompted questions and concerns about safety policies and risk management procedures to protect staff, children, youth, friends, and all members of our congregation. As a result, this document establishes policies and procedures for congregational and child/youth safety, and for the prevention of sexual misconduct, physical abuse, and harassment. This broad and multifaceted subject is referred to as a Safe Congregation Policy.

This document is considered "living" and may need to be amended to reflect changing needs. Requests for amendments should be made through the First UU, Board of Trustees (BOT).

### **1.1. Covenant of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU)**

#### **Covenant of Congregational Relationships**

We, the members of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU), adopt this Covenant to guide our interactions. We come together in community and fellowship from a common belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every person. In light of this shared value we agree to work together in creating an atmosphere of equality, trust and compassion within our congregation and the larger community.

**As a Unitarian Universalist congregation, we are called to affirm and promote these seven Principles:**

*The inherent worth and dignity of every person.*

*Justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.*

*Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in our congregations.*

*A free and responsible search for truth and meaning.*

*The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and society at large.*

*The goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all.*

*Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are apart.*

The guidelines set forth in this Covenant are borne from these seven principles.

As members of First UU, we pledge to be in community together in the spirit of these guidelines. We aspire that this Covenant will strengthen our relationships and enlarge our sense of community. We commit to living and working with this covenant, revisiting and revising it as needed.

**In this spirit we agree:**

To extend a warm welcome to friends and visitors by working intentionally to ensure that here no one is a stranger.

To foster a community that embraces diversity in all of its manifestations in a safe, positive and nurturing environment.

To recognize that all people are free to make choices regarding their own personal and spiritual journeys.

To listen attentively, seek others' opinions and understand that differing values do exist within our religious community.

To be aware of our language and attitude towards one another.

To deal with disagreements constructively, communicating with others in an open, direct, respectful, caring and responsible manner and endeavor to be a part of the solution.

To recognize that youth are an integral part of our community and welcome them in all facets of this Society's life.

To show gratitude, support and respect to the staff and Society members who volunteer their time and talents in support of the programs and governance activities of the Society.

To support that which is the most beneficial for the overall health of the congregation.

To be responsible for ourselves, our words, our actions and our own feelings.

## **1.2. Relationship Between Minister and Congregants**

We as a community expect the Minister to abide by the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association's (UUMA) Code of Professional Practice that acknowledges that ministers are the recipients of automatic trust, and comments directly on the issues of clergy sexual misconduct and the abuse of the trust congregations place in their ministers. In subscribing to this code, ministers agree not to exploit the powers inherent in their roles.

The complete text of the code is published in the UUMA Guidelines which is available in the Society library and/or office, from the UUMA, 24 Farnsworth Street, Boston, MA 02210-1409, or the UUMA website (log on to [www.uuma.org](http://www.uuma.org), click onto Guidelines and Code of Professional Practice).

In the case of violation of this code, the Safe Society Response Team (SSRT-see section 4.1 for a description) will contact the St. Lawrence District (SLD) Executive and the Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) who will initiate an investigation. The Safe Society Response Team (SSRT) will then work with the First UU Board of Trustees (BOT) to establish the most appropriate methods of communicating, counseling and responding to reactions within the congregation and the community.

## **1.3. Relationship Between Lifespan Faith Development Director and Congregants**

We as a community expect the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and other professional education staff to abide by the Liberal Religious Educators Association's (LREDA) Code of Professional Practice, which acknowledges that faith development educators are also the recipients of special trust. In subscribing to this code, professional faith development educators agree not to exploit the powers inherent in their roles.

The complete text of the Code is published in the LREDA Guidelines and Code of Professional Practices which is available in the Society library and/or office, from LREDA, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108, or the LREDA website ([www.uua.org/lreda/content/code.html](http://www.uua.org/lreda/content/code.html)).

In the case of violation of this code, procedures as outlined in this policy will be used.

## **1.4. Definitions**

The terms used in this document will have the following meanings:

**Abuse** includes non-accidental conduct that involves bodily injury or impairment; offensive physical or sexual contact, including physical or sexual abuse; physical or sexual harassment; physical or sexual molestation; or physical or sexual exploitation.

**Inappropriate behavior** means disruptive activity or behavior unsuitable for conduct in a faith community, specifically:

1. When any person's physical and/or emotional well-being or freedom to safely express their beliefs or opinions is threatened, the source of this threat must be addressed firmly and promptly, even if this ultimately requires the expulsion of the offending person/persons.

This policy shall apply to members, friends or others who attend events at First UU. Examples include but are not limited to:

**Physical abuse** includes offensive physical contact or activity that causes non-accidental bodily injury.

**Physical harassment or molestation or exploitation** means activity that places a person in fear by such acts as threatening or tormenting behavior, compelling a person by force or threat of force to engage in conduct from which the person has a right to abstain, knowingly restricting substantially the movements of another person without that other person's consent, communicating to a person a threat to commit an act against that person or another person or entity where the natural consequence of the threat is to place that person in fear or cause that person to engage in conduct in which that person otherwise would not engage, or similar repeated offensive physical or verbal conduct.

**Stalking** means the willful and repeated following, watching, and/or harassing of another person.

**Sexual abuse** means any sexual touching of a child or adult or any activity that causes a person to engage in any sexual act or conduct without that person's consent, or in circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

**Sexual harassment** means making sexual advances or requests for sexual favors to another person, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, where the other person by words or conduct has indicated that such words or conduct are not desired, or where a reasonable person would expect that such words or conduct would not be desired.

**Sexual molestation and sexual exploitation** means activity that places another person in a situation where that person feels compelled to engage in sexual conduct to which that person would not voluntarily consent, or in circumstances where that person is unable to refrain from consenting due to age or mental capacity or unusual vulnerability derived from the person's mental health or from the existence of a relationship of significant dependency or trust.

## **2. Preventing Sexual Misconduct, Physical Abuse and Harassment**

We acknowledge that preventing sexual misconduct, physical abuse, and harassment in our Unitarian Universalist communities and in society in general, is a complex goal. Conducting prevention education, training, careful hiring, and implementing safety procedures, are steps toward creating a safer Society environment.

### **2.1. Committee Oversight**

The Congregational Relations Committee (CRC) will oversee the management and implementation of the Safe Congregation Policy.

### **2.2. Education and Training**

Education and training is critical to the creation of a safer societal environment. Information, knowledge, and understanding support the development of healthy relationships based on self-esteem and respect for others.

**Comment [JH1]:** WE NEED TO MAKE A CORRESPONDING CHANGE IN THE OPERATING MANUAL. Is the Safe Society Committee and the Safe Society Response Team one and the same?

Greater understanding of sexuality and abuse will make us better able to avoid situations that could lead to abuse, and to move more effectively toward justice and healing. To this end, it is important to promote self-esteem and personal responsibility among our children, our members, and friends. We will provide programs as follows:

1. The BOT will delegate responsibility to the Congregational Relations Committee (CRC) for:
  - a. Promoting congregational awareness about this policy and the Code of Ethics at First UU.
  - b. Informing First UU members and visitors of resources from outside agencies that address the issues of substance abuse, alcoholism, mental health, domestic violence and sexual abuse.
2. The Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and Lifespan Faith Development Ministry (LFDM) are responsible for:
  - a. Offering age-appropriate information about development and sexuality for our children, youth, and adults on a regular basis, including clarification and understanding of the complex aspects of sexuality, as well as focusing on sexual abuse prevention, and
  - b. Keeping employees, advisors, and parents informed of this policy and reviewing it at least annually through the use of the following: the Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working with Children and Youth, herein identified as the Code of Ethics (Appendix 1).

### **2.3. Hiring**

Incidents of abuse and harassment often take place in the context of ongoing relationships. Therefore, it is essential that recruitment and hiring procedures protect children, youth, adults, and staff from injury, as well as protect staff, volunteers, and congregants from unfounded accusations, and protect First UU from ethical and legal liability.

All persons seeking paid employment at First UU, including (but not limited to) the Minister, the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD), the Office Secretary/Administrator, the Bookkeeper, and the Music Director will sign the Code of Ethics. They will be screened by the appropriate hiring committee, which will contact references (at least one of whom has known the applicant for a minimum of five years), record the contact, and conduct both a criminal history record check (including but not limited to checking the NYS Child Abuse & Sexual Abuse Registries) plus a formal interview with the candidate. The employment application and reference material will be confidential and will be available only as required by law and to those responsible for screening, hiring, or participating in the Safe Society Response Team (SSRT).

All employees will sign the Code of Ethics annually. The person responsible for maintaining personnel files will keep the signed code of ethics forms in each of the employee's personnel files.



Contracted services such as, but not limited to, custodial, vendors, repair and maintenance contractors, and grounds maintenance contractors will be provided with a copy of the Code of Ethics at the time of service procurement for the purpose of providing awareness of our policy. First UU will secure a sexual misconduct liability rider with our insurance carrier that has comprehensive coverage.

### **3 Lifespan Faith Development (LFD)-Youth Safety Procedures**

The prevention methods listed below are intended to protect the children and youth of our community and to provide guidelines for employees and staff in their interactions with children and youth. Any exceptions to the LFD Safety Procedures must be approved by the MINISTER.

#### **3.1. Adults and Older Youth Volunteers**

The following policy items are noted for adults and older youth volunteers in the LFD programs at First UU :

1. Prior to participating in the LFD and Youth Group programs, and annually thereafter, all volunteers will agree to allow First UU to conduct a background check, if desired, by First UU. The Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and the Minister will consult each other in reviewing the background checks. Alternatively, volunteers can submit a copy of a background check that may have been done in conjunction with the volunteer's employment, which includes two references. They will be asked to complete an Application Form for Volunteer Workers with Children and Youth (Appendix 2), Volunteer Reference Form (Appendix 3), and the Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working with Children and Youth (Appendix 1). In addition, volunteer teachers will attend an annual teacher training session to be scheduled by the LFDD.

If for any reason a person is deemed unsuited to serve in a position of leadership with children or youth, this decision and the reason for it will be communicated to the applicant, the Minister, the LFDD, and the President of the BOT.

2. Various supervisory methods are listed below. They will help First UU leaders avoid creating situations in which personal boundary issues can become a problem. Some of these methods will help leaders and teachers decrease the risk of misunderstandings and offer some support for handling various concerns.
  - a. Regular consultations with the LFDD
  - b. Completion of the Coming of Age Mentor Responsibilities and Agreement (Appendix 4)
  - c. On-going training
  - d. Parental permission whenever necessary
  - e. Visible classroom activity
  - f. Support in following the behavior guidelines of the Safe Congregation Policy.

### **3.2. Working with Children and Youth**

It is ultimately the responsibility of the entire congregation, not just those in leadership and teaching positions, to create and maintain a climate that supports the growth and welfare of children and youth. We encourage all First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) members and friends to read and abide by the Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working with Children and Youth (Appendix 1). However, those working with young people in the context of our Unitarian Universalist movement have a crucial and privileged role, one which carries with it a great deal of power and influence. Whether acting as a youth advisor, chaperone, childcare worker, teacher, or in any other role, the volunteer has a special opportunity to interact with our young people in ways which are affirming and inspiring to all involved.

While it is important that volunteers be capable of maintaining meaningful friendships with the young people they work with, they must exercise good judgment and mature wisdom in using their influence with children and youth, and refrain from inappropriate behavior and influence. Young people are in a vulnerable position when dealing with people older than themselves, and may find it difficult to speak out about any inappropriate behavior of their leaders, teachers, and caregivers.

Teachers, helpers, or youth group leaders, who have gained the trust of young people, are in a unique situation to observe behavior or be party to a conversation in which a possible abusive situation (either within or outside First UU is revealed. In this situation, it is the adult's responsibility to report any concerns immediately to the Minister or LFDD and legal authorities as appropriate (see Appendix 9). The Lifespan Faith Development Committee and/or the LFDD will provide annual training on dealing with suspected abuse or neglect.

### **3.3. Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) Education Classes/Programs (Nursery through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade)**

The LFDD collects needed medical information at the time of a child or youths' registration in the Lifespan Faith Development program and keeps needed medical information in their records. The LFDD and the LFD ministry will determine what is required medical information.

All classes including the nursery must be taught by a minimum of a two-person teaching team. The minimum adult to child ratio shall be 1:7. This requirement applies to off-site First UU, LFD activity as well as on-site classes. Teams should consist of at least one person who has been an active participant at First UU for at least one year or after six months if they have had previous teaching experience in a UU setting. Parents may serve as classroom aides and/or visit classes at any time. Teachers are subject to the approval of the Lifespan Faith Development Ministry. One individual may be briefly alone with a group when the other must leave as dictated by common sense and necessity for such purposes as bathroom breaks and escorting individual children away from the group.

If one of the volunteers is unable to fulfill their commitment, the LFDD or their delegate, will attempt to find another volunteer, and if that cannot be completed that class will be taught in a room where the door can be kept open and children have access to other adults in the program.

For grades 7-12, the youth group teachers must be at least 25 years old.

### **3.4. General Supervision Guidelines (Sunday Morning Programming)**

Each child will have a registration form on file that includes information about special needs and permission to accompany their Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) class and teachers on walks around First UU or the surrounding neighborhood on Sunday mornings. All personal information is held confidential.

Parents are responsible for their children before the service begins and after the LFD program has ended.

During services and classes, children must have a parent or another responsible adult on the premises unless prior arrangements have been made with the LFDD.

The LFDD, or designated supervisor, will do a walkthrough of all LFD spaces to check in with teachers during classes. Exceptions to this procedure are discouraged; however, there will occasionally be Sundays when it will not be possible for the LFDD to do a walkthrough.

### **3.5. Child Care for Congregational Events**

An up-to-date list of approved childcare providers will be maintained by the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD). When feasible, childcare providers will be selected from this list. Persons who have been active adult participants of First UU for at least one year may also serve as child care providers.

There will be at least two childcare providers for each event. If more than 10 children are anticipated, additional provider(s) will be scheduled.

If only two childcare providers are scheduled for an event, at least one must be a non-related adult 18 years of age or older. The other may be a member of the youth group(s) who is on the approved babysitter list. If additional childcare providers are needed, the number of adult providers shall be equal to or greater than the number of youth providing childcare.

If only two childcare providers are scheduled, they may not be related to each other by birth, marriage, or adoption, nor may they be in a committed relationship. If additional providers are scheduled, they may be related to one of the first two providers.

One childcare provider may be briefly alone with a group when the other must leave as dictated by common sense and necessity for such purposes as bathroom breaks and escorting individual children away from the group.

### **3.6. Youth (grades 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>) Events**

The following policy items are noted:

1. A Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form (Appendix 5) will be required for each youth at the sleepover.
2. Adults supervising youth sleepovers must be active participants at First UU for at least one year or after six months if they have had previous youth group experience in a St. Lawrence District

congregation. Parents who are staying over with their own youth need not have been active participants.

3. Youth who are attending a First UU hosted event must have an on-site sponsor with one adult sponsoring a maximum of seven youth. It is the responsibility of the registrar of the event to verify to the best of his/her ability that each youth has a sponsor. Adult sponsor responsibilities are provided in Appendix 7.
4. There will always be a minimum of two awake adults present during sleeping hours. Adult to youth ratio during sleeping hours must maintain the 1:7 ratio.. These adults will be responsible for addressing inappropriate behavior, maintaining unobstructed fire exits, and confirming that doors are locked. Visibility and accessibility shall be maintained into all activity rooms at all times, including sleeping rooms and movie rooms, by either an open door or an unobstructed interior window into the space. During a sleepover at First UU, there should be a minimum ratio of one adult to seven youth.
5. Adults should at all times be aware of their surroundings, and avoid situations during a youth event where they might be alone with a youth or out of sight of other adults.
6. During sleepovers at First UU, all outside doors will be locked against entry once the last youth has arrived, and will remain locked until parents arrive for pick-up in the morning. The goal of this provision is to help prevent unwanted visitors during a sleepover. Youth are still able to go outside onto First UU grounds as long as there is supervision within the guideline stated in the larger Safe Congregation Policy.
7. Each youth will be required to complete and sign the Youth Code of Ethics (Appendix 8) annually and the youth advisor will review it with the youth at each overnight. The LFDD will keep these on file.
8. The adult supervisors will maintain a list of attendees and do a bed check at the end of each evening before lights out.
9. Youth will sleep only in areas equipped with a functioning smoke detector and on floors with a functioning carbon monoxide detector.
10. Electronic and phone communication to children or youth initiated by adults in First UU leadership will only be used for the purposes of conducting the business of and maintaining the well-being of the group.
11. At no time shall youth participants leave the facility/campus of the hosting institution, except as part of planned off-site activities under the approval/leadership of the hosting institution. It is recommended that a minimum of two adults accompany a group going off-site, and the appropriate youth or child to adult ratio must be maintained.
12. Adults and the youth advisor will ensure that the sponsoring youth are aware of fire safety procedures and youth will be made aware of fire safety guidelines (Section 3.9).

### **3.7. Transportation To and From St. Lawrence District Events**

Please refer to SLD policy for guidance about transportation to and from SLD events.

<http://www.sld-yruu.org/sld-child-and-youth-safety-policy.html>

### **3.8. Transportation To and From First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) Events**

It is the responsibility of the First UU LFD Program, or the parents, to provide safe transportation to and from First UU sanctioned events or district events. The First UU Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) Program requires the following:

1. When traveling to and from outings, conferences, meetings, and other First UU activities, a parent/guardian signed permission slip is required for each child/youth participating or being driven to an off-site activity. In addition, each youth must sign the Youth Code of Ethics (Appendix 8). Riding with youth drivers is strongly discouraged, as is youth driving themselves if sleep deprivation is possible during an event.
2. Drivers participating in church activities must be at least 25 years old and meet the requirements of Sections 3.1 and 3.2.
3. Each driver must hold a valid license, and upon request must provide a valid vehicle registration, current inspection, and proof of automobile insurance coverage. Copies of these documents and the parental permission slips shall be filed in the First UU office for each off-site activity. Permission slips, when required, are to be kept on file for one year. Drivers must sign the Code of Ethics.
4. It is recommended that at least one person in the vehicle have a cell phone, and that cell phone numbers be shared among drivers and event leaders.
5. Every person in the car will have a fastened seat belt and age appropriate seating shall be arranged with respect to airbag safety rules, car seats, and booster seats, and smoking is prohibited in the car.
6. No driver may be sleep-deprived, consume alcohol or use any form of drug, which can affect physical or mental performance before or during the carrying out of his/her duty as a driver.
7. A minimum of two adults must accompany a group going off-site. The primary on-site adult leader may only make exceptions for exigent circumstances.
8. Written permission from the parent/guardian of all minor passengers will be obtained prior to being transported. This permission will include details of the event, such as date and location. Emergency contact information including name of physician, health insurance information, and consent to treat in case of an emergency must accompany all minors who are being transported by adults other than their parents. During travel, the forms will be kept by the driver of the vehicle, or the responsible adult traveling with the group using an alternate form of transportation (*e.g.*, bus or train).
9. There will be a phone chain for parents of children on trips at the discretion of the LFDD for arriving at destination and when leaving to return to home site.

### 3.9. Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation Process

Leaders responsible for programming and/or supervising youth events shall note the location of fire-safety equipment, ensure the posting and awareness of evacuation route maps, and identify of a safe place to congregate in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation.

The following policy items are noted for Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) *classes*:

1. In the event of a fire or emergency evacuation, LFD teachers and childcare workers shall take attendance rosters to the gathering site and take roll immediately.
2. In the event of fire or other emergency evacuation during Sunday LFD classes, LFD teachers and childcare workers should lead their class groupings out the nearest fire exit door and gather near the Waring Road entrance to the parking lot
3. The Facilities Team Chairperson will be responsible for executing the Emergency Evacuation Policy and its associated drills.
4. The following policy items are noted for district-level youth events:
5. During opening gatherings at district-level youth events, fire safety and response to fire shall be addressed. Leaders shall note the location of fire-safety equipment, review evacuation route maps, and identify a safe place to congregate in the event of an evacuation, with consideration to areas within the building that are being used at the time of the youth event.

### 3.10. Fire and Electrical Safety

The following policy items are noted:

1. Childproof plugs are to be placed in unused electrical outlets throughout the building.
2. The Facilities Team will replace the batteries and check the operation of all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors annually.
3. Fire extinguishers are to be located on all floors of First UU. Annual training is to be provided by the Facilities Team to First UU staff, Program Council members, LFD guides, and other interested congregants.
4. Fire evacuation routes are to be posted on each floor of the First UU building.
5. The Facilities Team will conduct a Sunday morning fire drill annually during LFD programming.

**Comment [V2]:** Is this training done by Buildings and Grounds and is that committee even called that anymore?

**Comment [V3]:** Is this supposed to be Program Council Members?

**Comment [V4]:** Is name correct? And is this done annually?

6. Fire evacuation plans, as well as the location of fire extinguishers and smoke detectors at First UU will be discussed at the time of teacher training.
7. Name of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) address and phone number will be affixed (or adjacent) to each phone.

#### **4. Responding to Complaints of Sexual or Physical Abuse or Harassment**

There are several situations that may prompt a response regarding a complaint or concern about sexual or physical abuse, including but not limited to:

1. A child, youth or adult reports possible abuse by a First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) official, member, friend, or attendee;
2. First UU official, member, friend, or attendee suspects that a child or youth is being abused;
3. Child or youth reports possible abuse by a family member or other individual; or
4. First UU officials learn that a First UU member, friend, or attendee (child, youth or adult) is under investigation for allegedly abusing others.

When any of the situations described above is reported, please refer such reports immediately to the Minister, LFDD or President of the Society. Because child abuse is addressed directly in New York State Law, such cases require that reporting laws be followed of The New York State Office of Children & Family Services.

##### **4.1. Safe Society Response Team (SSRT)**

A Safe Society Response Team (SSRT) will be established and in place at all times, with the names and phone numbers of team members available to all members and friends of First UU. This team will be composed of the Minister, the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD), and eight members of First UU (appointed annually by the Board of Trustees (BOT)). It is preferable that lay members of the SSRT be familiar with issues likely to arise to include but not be limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, human resources, and legal issues. When the SSRT is responding to an allegation, a minimum of the Minister, LFDD and three members of the SSRT will actively function on the team. In responding to allegations, the SSRT will work in conjunction with the CRC and will utilize the "Conflict Resolution Procedure" (See Operations Manual for this procedure), if appropriate. The "Conflict Resolution Procedure" is overseen and administered by the CRC, therefore, existing members of the CRC will be allowed to also serve on the SSRT.

The BOT of First UU will appoint one of its members to be the liaison to the SSRT. The responsibilities of this person include:

1. Bring nomination of SSRT members to the BOT of First UU for annual approval.
2. Report to the BOT of First UU when annual training for Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) staff and teachers has taken place.

In cases of a conflict of interest, a SSRT member must be excused from participation and replaced by a suitable alternate. Guided by the Philosophy Statement, their function, individually and collectively, will be to offer confidential support, advice, and counsel with concern for the safety of all parties involved. The SSRT will generally have the following responsibilities:

1. Know about community resources for child abuse, treatment for sex offenders, and support groups for survivors.
2. Know about state laws regarding reporting.
3. Be a resource for people to share their concerns.
4. Evaluate applications for LFD teachers and youth group leaders that are flagged by the Minister or LFDD as needing more information or follow-up. Facilitate annual training for LFD staff and teachers on issues, policies, and procedures relevant to sexual/physical abuse.
5. Work with the LFD Ministry to assure that the sex abuse education sections of the *Our Whole Lives* curricula are offered at each age level.
6. Receive allegations of possible abuse and recommend a process for expedient handling of such allegations in conjunction with the CRC and the "Conflict Resolution Procedure", as appropriate.
7. Meet with convicted sex offenders/criminals and/or individuals who have been accused of inappropriate behavior to develop a Limited Access Agreement for participation in First UU activities.
8. Coordinate the offering of First Aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training to church volunteers.

The SSRT will report its activities to the BOT. It will be the discretion of the BOT to decide whether activities remain confidential or disclosed to the congregation.

#### **4.2. Reporting Child Abuse to Community Authorities**

It is not the function of the Minister, the Lifespan Faith Development Director, or President of the Board of Trustees (BOT) to conduct an investigation into accusations of child abuse. Rather it is the policy of First UU to immediately report any situation in which any person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been, or is likely to be, abused or neglected. Such a report must be made to the New York State Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment at 800-342-3720 or 315-435-2884.

Once a report is made to the appropriate authorities, First UU will rely on the decisions of those authorities as to the validity of the complaint. It is also First UU's responsibility under these guidelines to develop an appropriate plan of response to the allegations.

In all cases, the Minister will also notify the President of the BOT and the St. Lawrence District Executive, and seek their advice and counsel. Additionally, the President or their designee will notify First UU's insurance company.



In the event the accused abuser is a member of the Ministerial staff, reports will be filed by, and the notifications referenced above will be the responsibility of the President of the BOT.

#### **4.3. Congregational Needs Regarding Reports of Abuse**

In the event of a founded report of abuse, the Safe Society Response Team (SSRT), the Minister, the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD), and the President of the Board of Trustees (BOT) will confer and decide if the congregation will be notified of the incident and how that notification will occur. The SSRT will ensure that all parties involved in such a report will be appropriately treated within the context of an internal, and if necessary, external investigation, and proper interventions will be implemented. Once the investigation is completed, the SSRT will report the findings and the course of action to all parties, including the entire congregation.

Following a report of suspected abuse, the SSRT will also develop a plan to address the pastoral needs of our congregation, including:

1. The victim: This may include providing information about or referrals to appropriate professional, community, and First UU or UU resources, as needed. Additionally the SSRT may assist in dealing with various external regulatory agencies.
2. Other members and friends of our congregation:
  - a. members, friends, or attendees immediately affected by the incident (such as family members or partners) whose needs we can help meet, either directly or indirectly;
  - b. the Minister (or other members of the First UU staff) to aid in dealing with the pastoral needs of the victim or accused person;
  - c. other members and friends of the congregation who witnessed one or more incidents or, who having heard about them, are reminded of their own concerns; and
  - d. other congregation members and friends who are relied on to a great degree by the victim or offender (or those connected to them).
3. The accused person (target of the investigation): Support may include helping the accused person access the appropriate professional, community, and spiritual resources. It remains the mission of this Society to recognize and support the integrity and inherent worth and dignity of that person even though we do not condone inappropriate behaviors, and to treat them with compassion.
4. Other victims who have been reluctant to come forward: If warranted, the response plan will include a way of reaching out to these individuals in a manner that is non-threatening.

The plan established will be such that other individuals are knowingly not put at risk for further incidents.

The protection from false or mistaken allegations of adults who teach in the LFD program or otherwise interact with children at First UU is also an important goal of this policy.

If after an investigation is completed, it is determined that the accused person was falsely accused, the SSRT will provide the appropriate means and support for restoring the personal status of the accused person to the greatest extent possible.

#### **4.4. Congregational Needs Regarding Reports of Harassment**

Incidents of alleged sexual or physical harassment of minors that either do not warrant involvement or are not accepted for investigation by the New York State Office of Children & Family Services shall be referred to the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and Minister. They may request that the SSRT meet to review such allegations. A plan shall be developed to address and resolve these complaints which shall make clear to the accused person that this congregation will not tolerate harassment of any form, as well as provide information about appropriate counseling or other resources for both the alleged victim and the alleged offender. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the minor(s) shall also be informed of this plan and involved, as appropriate, in its development.

Incidents of alleged sexual or physical harassment of adults will be referred to the SSRT, who will then make clear to the accused person that this Society will not tolerate harassment of any form, as well as provide information about appropriate counseling or other resource for both the alleged victim and the alleged offender. The SSRT would also be available to discuss concerns regarding situations that have felt uncomfortable but may not constitute abuse or harassment as defined in this Policy. The function of the SSRT would be to help individuals clarify the source of their discomfort, brainstorm effective means of resolving the problem, and share information about appropriate resources. The SSRT will report its activities to the BOT. It will be the discretion of the BOT to decide whether activities remain confidential or disclosed to the congregation.

#### **5. Guidelines Involving Sex Offenders**

There are generally a few ways that the presence of a convicted sex offender becomes known in a congregation. In an ideal world, a person with this background would come to the minister before they started coming to the congregation to discuss how they could participate in the congregation. This is probably not often the case. In some cases, people reveal their backgrounds to the ministers. In other circumstances, another congregant may discover a congregant's history of sexual offenses. Congregants should know that in these cases they should make their concern known to the minister. In other cases, someone may see a familiar name on the sex offender registry. Or, perhaps it becomes known that a long-standing member of the congregation has been accused of a sexual offense. Whatever way the information becomes known the minister should be alerted as soon as possible.

Once the situation is revealed that there is a person with a history of sex offense in the congregation, the minister, as quickly as possible, should meet privately with the individual to discuss the concerns that have been raised. The minister may want to check the local sex offender registry before meeting with the person. (If the minister is the one being accused, this manual and these steps do not apply. Instead, the President of the Board of Trustees (BOT) should be contacted immediately and the President should contact the Director for Congregational Services at the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and/or the District Executive serving the congregation.) If the person is a member of the congregation and has a partner who also attends the church, then the minister should reach out to the partner as well.

The individual should be asked to sign a release form so that the minister can contact his/her sex offender treatment provider and/or current therapist. The therapist and, if applicable, the parole/probation officer should be asked for their professional assessment of the likelihood that the sex offender will re-offend and whether additional restrictions beyond the standard Limited Access Agreement ought to be placed on the person's participation.

If the minister determines that there is genuine cause for the concern, the minister will then alert the Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD), the BOT, and the Safe Society Response Team (SSRT) about the individual in question. From this point forward the BOT is responsible for overseeing the process by the SSRT of establishing a Limited Access Agreement (Appendix 10) with the individual. The BOT and/or the SSRT may consult with District or UUA staff. They may also choose to call in an outside consultant if they think that this would be helpful. If the sex offender level of the individual in question and/or the assessment indicates that the person has completed or is participating successfully in treatment and is not at high risk for recidivism, the BOT, after consultation with the SSRT, may then ask the SSRT to develop a Limited Access Agreement. If the professional assessment indicates that the person is at high risk for re-offending, it is appropriate to deny that person involvement in the faith community until treatment is successful at reducing the risk.

If the BOT determines that the process should move forward, then the person should then be asked to meet with the SSRT. During the first meeting with the SSRT, the person in question will be asked to sign a temporary Limited Access Agreement, Appendix 10, which is general in nature. At a later time the Agreement will be changed, if need be, to better suit the needs of all parties concerned. Best practice would be that a temporary Limited Access agreement be entered into with the individual and the SSRT within two weeks of when the minister first meets with the individual in question.

Until such time as the temporary Limited Access agreement is in place, the individual will be asked to refrain from attending First UU activities.

Once a temporary agreement is in place then portions of the larger congregation will be told about the participation of this individual with our congregation. These people will include, but may not be limited to, other First UU staff, Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) guides and teachers, parents, and the Staff of the Montessori School.

Once the SSRT decides that it is appropriate to go forward and draft a more permanent Limited Access Agreement, or simply make the temporary Limited Access Agreement permanent then portions of the larger congregation will be told about the participation of this individual with our congregation. These people will include, but may not be limited to, other First UU staff, LFD guides and teachers, parents, and the Staff of the Montessori School.

The SSRT will draft the permanent Limited Access Agreement and the BOT will have the final vote on it. It is the BOT's responsibility to enter into a permanent Limited Access Agreement acting as representatives of the congregation. The BOT will thoughtfully consider the situation before then, and in consultation with the minister and the LFDD, will determine a congregational informational process so that members of First UU are appropriately informed in a timely manner. The BOT will weigh both the clear need of parents to be able to make informed timely decisions about their children's participation in activities at First UU and the individual in question's worth and dignity as an individual.

The SSRT, or a member thereof, should meet at least quarterly with any individual with whom it has a Limited Access Agreement to review the arrangement and address any concerns. If the Minister or the LFDD, as well as the President of the BOT, it is important that the departing person inform the new person of this situation to ensure provision of pastoral support for the offender as well as continuity of awareness of the situation. In sharing information appropriately it is also important to remain aware of confidentiality and privacy for all involved.

Copies of files including Limited Access Agreement information should be treated with care, and kept in a secure file drawer.

**REASONS FOR EXCLUDING A PERSON FROM ALL SOCIETY  
ACTIVITIES**

- A Refusal to allow the minister to contact the treatment provider and parole officer.
- A Refusal to go for a risk assessment with a qualified therapist.
- A Report by a treatment provider that the individual is at too high risk for recidivism.
- A Refusal to sign a Limited Access Agreement.
- A Refusal to comply with the requirements of the Limited Access Agreement.

Once an individual decides that they can comply with these conditions, the process would begin again to reassess the individual and see if they could be welcomed into the life of the congregation anew.

**6. Disruptive Behavior**

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) has committed itself to a Covenant of Congregational Relationships. We affirm our commitment to be a free and open Society and recognize the need to address the potential for behavior that may challenge our sense of individual and communal safety and well-being. Therefore, the following shall be the policy of First UU if and when such a challenge to our Covenant of Congregational Relationships may arise:

- A. Situations involving inappropriate behavior will be brought to the attention of the President of the Board of Trustees (BOT) and the Minister who may refer the situation to the Safe Society Response Team (SSRT). The BOT will be notified of this action if it is referred to the SSRT. The SSRT will work together with the CRC and the “Conflict Resolution Procedure” as appropriate.
- B. The SSRT will investigate the matter using this policy for guidance and will document the investigation via the “Conflict Resolution Procedure”.
- C. If an immediate response is required, the Minister, if available, will undertake this, and/or the leader of the group involved. This may include asking the offending person or persons to leave, or suspending a meeting or activity until such a time as it can safely be resumed. If further assistance is required, the Police Department may be called. Any time any of these actions are undertaken without the Minister being present, the Minister and the President of the BOT must be notified. All plans for follow-up steps will be referred to the SSRT.
- D. Persons identified as being inappropriate will be responded to as individuals of dignity and worth.

E. Information concerning the alleged incident(s) that led to concern will be systematically collected from the concerned parties, documented by the SSRT, and provided to the BOT before any action is taken.

F. The SSRT will meet to assess the findings and decide on a course of action, with the following four levels of response recommended to them:

1. Stage One: Two or more SSRT members contact the person named as the source of the disruption and informs them of the nature of the concern. The person's viewpoint of the matter will be elicited, valued, and documented. SSRT members will then assess the situation.

2. Stage Two: If the basis of the original concern is determined to be valid, this finding may be clearly communicated to the person in question and a contract for clearly defined behavior change may be negotiated. Such communication and contract will be documented.

3. Stage Three: If the person in question refuses to negotiate a contract, refuses to abide by a contract or is engaging in behavior of sufficient severity, he or she may be excluded from First UU for a specified period of time, with reasons for such action, and conditions for return, clearly communicated and documented.

4. Stage Four: The person in question is permanently excluded from First UU and the premises with steps taken as needed to enforce the integrity of this decision.

G. Should the SSRT decide that exclusion or expulsion from First UU is necessary, they will recommend to the BOT that action should taken.

H. The four stages of response recommended by this policy may be applied in the order determined by the SSRT and the BOT in their judgment.

I. If appropriate, the SSRT may offer referrals for professional services.

J. All documentation developed in the course of investigating and resolving allegations of disruptive behavior will be provided to the BOT and will be kept confidential. The President of the BOT will be responsible for determining access to such documentation and for ensuring its security.

K. To aid in evaluating the problem and determining the appropriate response, the following points will be used in assessing the nature and severity of referred problems:

1. **Dangerousness**: Is the individual a source of threat or harm to persons or property?

2. **Disruptiveness**: What is the extent of disruption to First UU functions?

3. **Congregational Integrity**: How likely is it that existing or prospective First UU members will be driven away by the alleged behavior?

4. **Causes:** Why is the disruption occurring? Is it a conflict between the individual and others in the Society? Is it due to a professionally diagnosed condition of mental illness?

5. **Probability of Change:** How likely is it that the problem behavior will diminish in the future?

## **7. Emergency Preparation and Response**

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) is committed to creating a safe place of worship and strives to act responsibly and proactively to anticipate and avoid emergencies before they may occur. As a result, management policies, plans and procedures have been developed to manage day-to-day operations at the church. Non-emergency building matters are not included in this policy.

In cases where an incident occurs and the media contacts First UU for comment or inquiry, the Minister and the President of the BOT will confer and designate a central spokesperson to address the media inquiry.

### **7.1. First Aid, CPR and Automated External Defibrillator**

First aid, CPR, and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training will be offered to Society volunteers through either the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, local fire department, or a certified trainer. The Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) Ministry will facilitate and coordinate offering this training.

### **7.2. Medical Emergency Response**

#### **7.2.1 Minor Injuries**

Minor injuries that occur during Lifespan Faith Development (LFD) classes should be reported to the LFDD or the Minister using the incident report form (Appendix 11). Simple first aid supplies can be found in the Society office, the kitchen, and the LFD supply room.

Minor injuries at other times should be reported to the First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) office secretary/administrator. First UU's trained first aid personnel, if available, will be summoned to provide initial injury evaluation and first aid treatment. First aid responders will use the following general response protocol:

- First survey the area to see if it is safe to enter
- Do respond quickly, using accepted standards of care
- Do not attempt to move anyone who is unconscious, has a broken limb or injured back. Keep person from moving.
- Administer first aid as trained. Practice Universal Precautions:
  - Do check for breathing/open airway & administer rescue breathing if needed
  - Do try to stop severe bleeding
  - Do treat for shock and make patient comfortable

- Do get all information concerning the patient and accident or illness if person is conscious (signs, and symptoms, allergies, medication taken, pertinent past illnesses, last oral intake, events leading to pertinent past illnesses, events leading to the illness/injury).
- Do request external emergency medical services if there is any question or concern
- If contact was made with blood or body fluids follow First UU's *Bloodborne Pathogen Standard Clean-up and Exposure Procedures* in Section 7.2.3

In the event the injured person needs additional medical attention, the preferred method of transport is the local emergency squad (ambulance). Transportation by car or personal vehicle should be avoided except for the most minor of injuries. Examples of injuries requiring transport by the rescue squad are potential broken bones, a head, neck or spine injury, injuries/illnesses involving the respiratory or circulatory (heart) systems, injuries with severe bleeding and if the injured person shows signs of shock or disorientation. Under no circumstances are injured persons allowed to transport themselves from the facility to obtain external medical evaluation/treatment.

#### 7.2.2 Major Injuries

When a person sustains a major injury or is experiencing a major personal health emergency, (e.g., heart attack, stroke), people in the area will immediately call for the local emergency rescue squad by calling 911 on a church telephone or personal cell phone. Additionally, area personnel should locate and notify the church's Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and/or Minister to provide immediate front line first aid assistance until the rescue squad arrives. If church volunteers are trained, CPR and or AED will be administered.

#### 7.2.3 Blood Borne Pathogen (BBP) Clean-up and Exposure Procedures

The clean-up of body fluids or materials contaminated with or suspected to be contaminated with body fluids (blood borne pathogens, a.k.a. BBP) resulting from an injury or personal health emergency will be performed only by personnel who have received training. Personnel who should receive training include Society volunteers (e.g., Program council, SSRT, LFD guides, ushers), the LFDD, and the Minister.

Use the following procedures for cleaning and sanitizing surfaces that have been contaminated with blood or bodily fluids:

1. Put on gloves.
2. Wash the surface with soap and water.
3. Rinse with water.
4. Spray the surface with a solution of 1 tablespoon of bleach to 1 quart of water.
5. Let sit for at least 2 minutes.
6. Wipe with paper towel and let air dry.
7. Dispose of contaminated cleaning supplies in a plastic bag and secure.
8. Remove gloves and dispose of them in a plastic-lined receptacle.
9. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and rinse with water.

In the event a person has or suspects they may have been exposed to BBPs (*i.e.*, contact with), they must immediately contact their physician to obtain professional medical advice and/or attention. Additionally, a member of the SSRT, First UU office secretary/administrator, LFDD or Minister must be notified of the event.

### **7.3. Fire/Explosion Prevention and Response**

Should a fire or explosion occur at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) , the Accident/Incident Report contained in Appendix 11 should be completed and provided to the First UU office secretary/administrator for distribution and filing.

#### 7.3.1 Fire/Explosion Prevention

Appendix 12 provides a fire safety checklist that helps First UU minimize the threat of fire. The checklist is completed semi-annually (*i.e.*, February and August) by a member of the Facilities Team with a copy filed in the Society office. The results are shared with the Minister, Lifespan Faith Development Director (LFDD) and the Board of Trustees (BOT) in order to discuss potential deficiencies and corrective actions.

### **7.4. Carbon Monoxide Exposure Prevention and Response**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an invisible, odorless, colorless gas created when fuels (such as natural gas, wood, propane, and oil) burn incompletely. At First UU, heating furnaces, kitchen stoves, and the fireplace can potentially be sources of CO. Proper maintenance and operation of these combustion sources can prevent carbon monoxide exposure to the building occupants. The following prevention measures are utilized at First UU for CO exposure:

- CO monitors (with audible alarms) should be installed on each level of the church and in the furnace room.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions for placement and mounting height.
- Choose a CO alarm that has the label of a recognized testing laboratory.
- Test CO alarms at least once a month; replace them according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- If the audible trouble signal sounds, check for low batteries. If the battery is low, replace it. If it still sounds, call National Grid or the fire department.
- If the CO alarm sounds, immediately move to a fresh air location (outdoors) or by an open window or door. Make sure everyone inside the Society building is accounted for. Call for help from a fresh air location and stay there until emergency personnel arrive.



## 7.5. Severe Weather Response

### 7.5.1 Lightning Protection

When lightning strikes a building, it will travel through the building and wiring until it finds the ground. This extra voltage can travel through electronic equipment and overload it. The heat from the lightning and the heat generated from the resistance it encounters can quickly start a fire. The following prevention measures are utilized at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) for lightning protection:

- Purchase and use of quality surge protection for high-value equipment such as office computers, soundboards, televisions, and video equipment. A surge protector shields electronics from surges in electrical power. Different levels of surge protection are available, beginning with “single-stage” devices with three small surge elements. A “multi-stage” surge protector with six large surge elements and inductive chokes is recommended.
- Review wires that extend outside of the building. Inspect condition and whether they are clear of potential tree and limb falls.
- Repair corroded or loose connectors, as applicable.
- Unplug valuable and sensitive electronics when not in use or before a storm begins.
- Additional information about lightning protection is available at the [Lightning Protection Institute](#).

### 7.5.2 Thunderstorm and Tornado Response

The following prevention measures are utilized at First UU to reduce risk to the congregation should severe thunderstorms or a tornado occur:

- During any storm, listen to local radio news, internet news, or a NOAA Weather Radio to stay informed about watches and warnings.
- Postponement of Society activities when threatening weather exists.
- If a tornado threat is imminent, congregants will be moved to the First UU fellowship hall of, and to the interior rooms with the least amount of wall glass and that provide protection from wind-driven debris. Once in the room, people will be positioned under sturdy objects, to the extent they exist.
- **Do not** open windows in an effort to relieve pressure; the danger is greater that debris will fly through windows causing injury or damage.
- It isn't necessarily safer to crouch in the west or southwest corner of a room, because debris-filled gusts can come from any direction during the atmospheric chaos of a twister.
- If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a basement, the First UU fellowship hall, a shelter or sturdy building. If you cannot quickly walk to a shelter:
  - Immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt and try to drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
  - If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. There are the following options as a last resort:
    - Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows, covering with your hands and a blanket if possible.
    - If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.
    - Your choice should be driven by your specific circumstances.

**Comment [V5]:** What does this stand for?

- Following a storm:
  - Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.
  - Continue to listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or to local radio and television stations for updated information or instructions, as access to roads or some parts of the community may be blocked.
- If First UU considers adding on to our existing structure, we will consider building a safe room with steel-reinforced concrete walls and no windows. Publications on storm response and constructing tornado shelters are offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). FEMA can be contacted through its [Web site](http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/rms/rmsp453.shtm) <http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/rms/rmsp453.shtm> or by phone at (202) 566-1600. FEMA publications can be ordered by calling (800) 480-2520.
- The National Weather Service offices in the United States each have a Warning Coordination Meteorologist who is available to help develop tornado and storm contingency plans.

## **7.6. Bomb Threat Response**

The following response actions are provided to address a bomb threat at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU).

1. If you observe a suspicious object or potential bomb on the property or within the building, **DO NOT HANDLE THE OBJECT!** Clear the area and immediately call 911.
2. Any person receiving a phone call bomb threat should ask the caller:
  - When is the bomb going to explode?
  - Where is the bomb located?
  - What kind of bomb is it?
  - What does it look like?
  - Why did you place the bomb?
  - Where is the call being made from?
  - **If possible, document the call.**
3. Keep talking to the caller as long as possible and record the following:
  - Time of call.
  - Approximate age and sex of caller.
  - Speech pattern, accent, possible nationality, etc.
  - Emotional state and temperament of the caller.
  - Background noise.
4. If possible, have someone contact 911 while you are on the phone with the caller.
5. If possible, make a cursory inspection of your area for suspicious objects and report the location to 911. Again, **DO NOT TOUCH ANY SUSPICIOUS OBJECTS!** Do not open drawers, cabinets, or turn lights off.

If the bomb threat threatens you and other building occupants, or if you are instructed to do so, evacuate the space by walking quickly to the nearest marked exit, proceed to the building's initial gathering point, and await further instructions.

6. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
7. Following emergency evacuations, your designated place of shelter is the primary assembly point, or alternate assembly point if the emergency is impacting your primary location. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
8. If requested, assist Emergency crews as necessary.
9. A Command Post may be set up near the emergency site. Keep clear of the Command Post unless you have official business.

**IMPORTANT—DO NOT RETURN TO AN EVACUATED BUILDING** until and unless told to do so by Society officials. During an actual emergency resulting in a building evacuation, **HEADCOUNTS** are to be performed at the assembly point(s). If possible, **handwrite** the names of those at the assembly point.

### **7.7. Suspicious Mail Response**

Suspicious packages can be identified, but not limited to, as having any of the following characteristics:

- Excessive Postage
- Handwritten or poorly typed addresses
- Incorrect titles
- Title, but no name
- Misspelling of common words
- Oily stains, discolorations or odor
- No return address
- Excessive weight
- Lopsided or uneven envelopes
- Protruding wires or aluminum foil
- Excessive amounts of packing materials such as tape, string, etc.
- Markings depicting an explosion, chemical or biological agent release
- Ticking or other unusual sounds
- Marked with restrictive endorsements, such as "Personal" and "Confidential"
- Postmarks that do not agree with the return address

The following response actions are provided to address suspicious mail at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU):

1. If you receive or open a suspicious letter or package, immediately contact local police and fire departments.
2. If the suspicious letter or package is unopened:
  - Do not shake or empty the contents of the letter or package.
  - Place the letter or package in some type of container to prevent leakage.
  - Leave the room or area and prevent others from accessing.
  - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water.

3. If a letter or package is opened and a suspicious substance falls out:
  - Cover the spilled materials without trying to clean it up.
  - Leave the room or area and prevent others from accessing.
  - Immediately wash your hands with soap and water—if any clothing has become contaminated, remove it without brushing any materials off your clothing.
4. Develop a list of anyone who was in the room or area when the suspicious envelope or package was discovered. Give this list to the fire and law enforcement responders.
5. If the suspicious package appears to be an immediate threat to you and other building occupants, or if you are instructed to do so, walk quickly to the nearest marked exit, and proceed to the building's initial gathering point.
6. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
7. Following emergency evacuations, your designated place of shelter is the primary assembly point, or alternate assembly point if the emergency is impacting your primary location. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
8. If requested, assist Emergency crews as necessary.
9. A Command Post may be set up near the emergency site. Keep clear of the Command Post unless you have official business.

**IMPORTANT—DO NOT RETURN TO AN EVACUATED BUILDING** until and unless told to do so by Society officials. During an actual emergency resulting in a building evacuation, **HEADCOUNTS** are to be performed at the assembly point(s). If possible, handwrite the names of those at the assembly point.

### **7.8. Suspicious Persons(s) Response**

The key to threat reduction is to recognize suspicious behavior in the first place. The following response actions are provided to address suspicious behavior First UU:

1. Be vigilant for persons engaging in any of the following:
  - Going door-to-door, or office-to-office.
  - Loitering in hallways or other common areas.
  - Entering private offices unescorted.
  - Offering items for sale inside buildings.
  - Asking for money or other goods.
  - Leaving packages.
2. If you see someone engaging in any of these types of behaviors and you are uncomfortable or concerned about the behavior, immediately notify a Society official, a Society volunteer on duty, or a member of the BOT to report the incident. Contact local police if deemed necessary and provide the following information:
  - Nature of the incident.
  - Location of the incident.
  - Description of person(s) involved.

- Current location of the person(s).
  - Your current location.
3. If local police are contacted, assist them upon arrival by supplying them with any additional information.
  4. If there is gunfire, explosions, or any other threat related to immediate harm, you should take cover immediately using any available concealment.
  5. If you are notified by any emergency communication method (verbal, email, phone, reverse 911) of certain defensive actions to take, comply completely with such directions.
  6. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
  7. Following emergency evacuations, your designated place of shelter is the primary assembly point, or alternate assembly point if the emergency is impacting your primary location. Proceed to your assembly point once instructed to do so by your Building Coordinator, RA, faculty member or supervisor. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
  8. A Command Post may be set up near the emergency site. Keep clear of the Command Post unless you have official business.

**IMPORTANT—DO NOT RETURN TO AN EVACUATED BUILDING** until and unless told to do so by Society officials. And remember—during an actual emergency resulting in a building evacuation, **HEADCOUNTS** are to be performed at the assembly point(s). If possible, handwrite the names of those at the assembly point.

### **7.9. Active Shooter/Hostile Intrude Prevention/Response**

1. If you witness (or otherwise have reason to believe) an active shooter/hostile intruder is on Society property, immediately call 911 if possible. If you are notified an active shooter/hostile intruder is on Society property by any emergency communication method (verbal, email, phone, reverse 911), consider the following actions:
  - Run away from the threat if you can, as fast as you can, and never run in a straight line.
  - If you are in a classroom, the staff/volunteer should immediately lock children, congregants, and themselves in the room (if possible), and cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into adjacent hallways. Keep everyone together.
  - If you are in an office or meeting room, lock yourself into your room, and close any blinds or curtains.
  - If you are in a hallway, seek shelter in the nearest securable room, lock yourself in the room, and close any blinds or curtains.
  - If you are in an outdoor unsecured area, seek shelter in the nearest building, locate a securable room, lock yourself in the room, and close any blinds or curtains.
  - Watch for vehicles, bushes, trees and anything that could possibly block your view from the hostile person while you are running outside.
2. If you are caught by the intruder, never look him/her in the eyes, obey all commands, and try to remain as calm as possible. Do not appear to pose a challenge, and be submissive.

3. Once the police arrive, obey all of their commands. This may involve your being handcuffed or made to put your hands in the air. This is done for safety reasons, and once circumstances are evaluated by the police, they will give you further directions to follow.
4. During building evacuations, assist the handicapped in exiting the building.
5. Following emergency evacuations, your designated place of shelter is the primary assembly point, or alternate assembly point if the emergency is impacting your primary location. Keep streets, fire lanes, hydrants and walkways clear for emergency vehicles and crews.
6. A Command Post may be set up near the emergency site. Keep clear of the Command Post unless you have official business.

IMPORTANT—DO NOT RETURN TO AN EVACUATED BUILDING until and unless told to do so by emergency response personnel. And remember—during an actual emergency resulting in a building evacuation, HEADCOUNTS are to be performed at the assembly point(s). If possible, handwrite the names of those at the assembly point.

#### **7.10. Pandemic Influenza**

Outbreaks of acute infectious/communicable diseases (like Pandemic Influenza) will principally be managed in accordance with local, state and federal health guidelines. This may result in the temporary suspension of all Society functions, buildings and facilities.

#### **7.11. Accident/Incident Reporting**

The Accident/Incident Report contained in Appendix 11 should be completed and provided to the First UU office secretary/administrator for distribution and filing.

**8. Training and Drills**

The following table summarizes the training and drills that will be conducted by First UU in the carrying out the Safe Congregation Policy.

Activity	Frequency	Participants	Responsibility
<i>Training</i>			
1. Safe Congregation Policy Awareness	Annually (Fall)	LFD Guides/Teachers	LFDD
		Society Ministries, Teams, & Committees	Program Council Chair and LFDD
2. Fire extinguisher	Annually	Society Ministries, Teams, & Committees	Program Council Chair and Facilities Team
3. First aid, CPR, Automated External Defibrillator (AED)	Per Red Cross Recommendations	Society Volunteers	LFD Ministry
<i>Inspections</i>			
1. Fire extinguisher	Monthly	Facilities Team	Facilities Team
2. Fire safety check-list	Semi-annually (February and August)	Facilities Team	Facilities Team
<i>Drill</i>			
1. Emergency (fire) evacuation	Annually	Congregants and Staff	Facilities Team

# APPENDIX 1

## **Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working With Children and Youth**



**Code of Ethics for Adults and Older Youth Working With Children and Youth (1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU)**

Adults and older youth who teach and/or lead our children and youth play a key role in fostering the spiritual growth and character development of our children and youth. It is therefore especially important that those in leadership positions provide the special nurture, care, and support that will enable our children and youth to develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence and responsibility. Therefore, those who teach and/or lead our children/youth will:  
Provide nurturing care and support to all children/youth.

Work to help children/youth develop a positive sense of self and a spirit of independence.

Respect the self-hood of each young person, including the absolute right to privacy of his or her own mind and body.

Not engage in any behavior with young people, which constitutes verbal, emotional or physical abuse.

Not engage in behavior or language, which is personally threatening or demeaning.

Not engage in any sexually harassing behavior, nor any other sexual, seductive or erotic behavior with children/youth.

Not encourage or condone any sort of illegal or unethical activity on the part of children/youth.

Leaders shall be informed of the Code of Ethics and agree to it before assuming their role. In

cases of violation of this code, appropriate action will be taken.

I have read the above Code of Ethics and understand that it governs expected behavior of those working with the children and youth at First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# APPENDIX 2

## Application Form – Volunteers Who Work with Children and Youth

**Application Form - Volunteers and Employees who Work with Children and Youth ( 4 Pages)**  
**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU)**

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any volunteer position involving the supervision of minors. The purpose of this form is to help First UU provide a safe and secure environment for the children and youth that participate in programs sponsored by the congregation. Information provided will be used solely for the purpose of determining qualifications for working with minors.

**Personal Data**

First, Middle, Last, Name (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever used a different name (circle):    YES    NO

If yes, please list with dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years at current address: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have not lived at this address for at least 5 years, please list any previous addresses with dates:

\_\_\_\_\_

In what states have you lived in since you were 18 years old:

\_\_\_\_\_

Employer:

\_\_\_\_\_

Employer Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

Employer Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ # of years at current employment: \_\_\_\_\_

**Congregational History and Prior Work with Children/Youth**

List congregations you have attended during the past five years, starting with First UU:  
(Please list: Name of Congregation, City, State, Date of Membership/Attendance)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

List previous congregational and community work involving children/youth: (please include name of institution or organization and your role or duties, and person to whom you were responsible)

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**References**

May we call your current employer for a character reference?    YES    NO

If not, please tell us why:

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List two personal references who you have known for 3 or more years (not former employers or relatives):

**Reference one**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference two**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you: \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Information**

Have you ever:

Been convicted of any criminal offense?	YES	NO
Been accused of any crimes against a person, including rape, incest, sexual exploitation of a minor, or sexual or physical assault of a minor?	YES	NO
Been convicted of or pleaded guilty to a criminal offense related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?	YES	NO
Had any civil judgment ever been made against you for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?	YES	NO
Resigned from employment or been disciplined or terminated by an employer for reasons related to sexual misconduct or child abuse?	YES	NO

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, please provide details (attach a separate piece of paper if necessary):

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Other than above, is there any fact or circumstance involving you or your background that would call into question your being entrusted with the supervision, guidance, and care of children or youth?	YES	NO
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If YES, please provide details:

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**Driving Information**

Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach a copy of your current **Driver's License, Registration and Certificate of Insurance.**

If you will be driving children and/or youth:

We recommend personal injury liability insurance of \$100,000 minimum.

Have you ever been convicted of a moving violation or driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs?

YES

NO

If yes, please state date and nature of conviction:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant's Statement and Release**

I authorize the congregation to contact references and other religious institutions listed in this application to obtain information about my background regarding my character and fitness for work with children and youth. I authorize references to provide such information (including opinions) about me. I hereby release and hold harmless from liability any person or organization that provides information. I also agree to hold harmless this congregation, its trustees, employees and volunteers.

Further, I understand that a person responsible for screening staff or volunteers will conduct a background check that may include the sex offender registry and/or contact with the local police. This may be waived by First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) by my providing proof of having successfully passed a comparable background check **within two years of the date below**.

I understand that any information obtained about me through this application process will be kept strictly confidential and will be available only to those responsible for screening staff or volunteers or participating in a response team, or as required by law. Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by the policies of First UU regarding child care and youth workers. Any information obtained through this process may be used, at the sole discretion of First UU, to deny this application. I attest that the above information is true and correct.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**For Use by First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse Only:**

Application reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Placed?      YES    NO

Position Assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 3

## Volunteer Reference Form

**Volunteer Reference Form-First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse ( 1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU)**

**Volunteer Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position applied for:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Reference Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Reference address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What is your relationship to the volunteer applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How long have you known the volunteer applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How well do you know the volunteer applicant, describe their strengths:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How would you describe the volunteer applicant's ability to relate to children and/or youth:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How would you feel about having him/her as a volunteer worker with your child and/or youth:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Do you know of any facts or characteristics that would negatively affect the volunteer applicant's ability to work with children and/or youth? If so, please describe:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please list any other comments you would like to make:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# APPENDIX 4

## Coming of Age Mentor Responsibilities and Agreement

**Coming of Age Mentor Responsibilities and Agreement (1 Page)**  
**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

Mentor responsibilities include:

Mentor should answer or help the participant find answers to any questions the participant may have about the program.

Mentor should discuss with participant any fears and concerns about fulfilling any of the requirements.

Mentor must show interest in the participant's progress and keep informed about the program. Updates and information will be provided via email and telephone by the LFDD.

Mentor must show enthusiasm for the program and First UU and generally encourage the participant to value what he or she is doing.

Mentor should work to provide an open relationship in which teen issues such as drugs, alcohol and sex can be discussed confidentially and free of parental judgment.

Mentor is encouraged to find ways in which to have social time with the participant. For instance, it can be particularly rewarding to have lunch with your participant along with another mentor and their participant. Please note that all "one-on-one" time must be spent in the presence of other adults (*i.e.*, at a restaurant, sporting event, or before/after class).

Mentor is encouraged to participate in some part of the participant's social justice project if their schedule allows.

Mentor is expected to communicate monthly with their participant starting on or around (date) \_\_\_\_\_.

Mentor must be present at the Coming of Age Service on Affirmation Sunday on (date) \_\_\_\_\_.

Name Printed:

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 5

## Medical Information Form

**Medical Information Form ( 2 Pages)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

**Child/Youth Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Legal  
Guardian:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City/State/Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Doctor Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dentist/Orthodontist  
Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dentist/Orthodontist  
Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hospital Preference:** \_\_\_\_\_

Do you carry family medical/hospital Insurance:            YES            NO

Name of parent/person with insurance policy:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance Agency:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy #: \_\_\_\_\_ Group #: \_\_\_\_\_

Medications currently taking:

\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies/Medical conditions:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of last Tetanus shot: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your child under the care of a physician for:

Epilepsy:            YES   NO

Diabetes:            YES   NO

Other (specify):    YES   NO

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name (please print):

\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Case of Emergency Contact:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Evening Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent Attendance information:**

I, (circle) **will** / **will not** attend the event.

# APPENDIX 6

## Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form

**Parent/Guardian Consent and Medical Release Form (1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ am the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_  
(parent/guardian name) (youth name)

I give consent for him/her to attend \_\_\_\_\_  
(event) on \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Insert specifics of trip such as where they will leave from and what time and when and where they will return to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give my consent and authority for the designated adult(s) to take action to help ensure the safety, health and welfare of my son/daughter/ward. I understand that if he/she breaks any federal, state, or local laws that I will be informed. I also request and empower my child's sponsor to authorize medical personnel and hospitals to provide all medical care, including but not limited to hospital tests, emergency surgical care, pathology, radiology and anesthesia, surgery and prescriptive drugs for the health of my child.

Designated adult(s) for the event specified above:

\_\_\_\_\_

- I have submitted medical information when child/youth was registered for the LFDD Program.
- There are no changes to the medical information on file with the LFDD Program.
- Changes to the medical information for my child/youth are attached.

The Undersigned, on his/her own behalf, and on behalf of her/his minor child/ward, does hereby RELEASE, discharge and covenant to hold harmless First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU), its officers, employees and volunteers, from any and all claims, causes of action, and liability of any kind or nature, including personal injuries or death, or in any way arising out of, directly or indirectly, the child's/ward's attendance or participation in: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Event)

Parent/Guardian Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 7

## Adult Sponsor Responsibilities



**Adult Sponsor Responsibilities (1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

Sponsor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth(s) name(s) to be sponsored: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sponsorship means that I take responsibility for the well-being, safety, and best interests of this youth during this event. While attending this event:

\_\_\_\_\_

I will work out a system of communication with this youth during this event, which is mutually satisfying to the youth, sponsor and parents. I recognize that this youth has agreed to abide by all federal, state and local laws while attending this event and has signed a Youth Code of Ethics indicating that he/she is responsible for his/her own behavior.

If the youth does not act accordingly, I understand I will be responsible for the consequences of her/his actions.

I understand the Code of Ethics includes no alcohol or illegal drug use during the event and that both the youth and I are bound by this code. I pledge not to arrive under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. I pledge to use no alcohol or illegal drugs during this event.

I am not sponsoring more than a total of seven youth at this event.

I have read and signed the Code of Ethics included with this form.

# APPENDIX 8

## Youth Code of Ethics

**Youth Code of Ethics (1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

I am attending the \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of event) (date of event)

I understand that this event is coordinated by (name of person, persons, or committee):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I understand my behavior will affect the Youth community of First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse while attending this event.

I will act in ways that encourage the well-being, safety, and the best interests of everyone attending this event.

I will follow all federal, state and local laws.

I will work out a system of communication with my sponsor during this event.

I understand that I am encouraged to express myself in healthy ways and to respect each other's boundaries.

I understand that behavior that breaks down the community, including sexual activity and sexual harassment, is inappropriate and, therefore, not permitted in this setting.

I will not consume any alcohol or illegal drugs.

I, (Print Name) \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the Youth Code of Ethics. I agree to abide by these guidelines for the duration of the event. I understand that if I break this agreement, my parents/guardians will be contacted and that I may be prohibited from attending any future events sponsored by First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse.

Youth Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 9

## Reporting Child Abuse in New York

## **Reporting Child Abuse in New York**

### **1. Reporting Child Abuse in New York**

- a. Any person having reasonable cause to believe that a child has been subjected to child abuse or acts of child abuse shall report this information immediately to the Office of Children & Family Services (OCFS).
- b. The Office of Children & Family Services operates a 24-hour 7-day-a-week toll-free hotline **1-800-342-3720** or **(315) 422-9701 (paid call)** to receive reports of child abuse and neglect. The workers decide if the callers' allegations merit state intervention or referrals to other child advocacy groups.
- c. OCFS accepts allegations of child abuse and neglect by telephone and in person from all sources, including identified sources, anonymous sources, sources which have incomplete information and referrals from educators, from the child or parent themselves.
- d. Upon receiving a report of child abuse or neglect, an OFCS caseworker shall investigate the allegations and take such action as is necessary to ensure the safety of the child.

### **2. Immunity from Civil or Criminal Liability**

- a. Any person who, pursuant to the law, reports abuse or neglect or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action.

### **3. Penalty for Failure to Report**

- a. Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law is a disorderly person and subject to a fine up to \$1,000 or up to six months imprisonment, or both.

# APPENDIX 10

## Limited Access Agreement (Example)

**Limited Access Agreement (Example)**

First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse (First UU) is committed to affirming and defending the dignity and worth of all persons. We are committed to being a faith community open to all who wish to worship with us, guided by our principles and committed to our mission and covenant. At the same time, your status as a “level \_\_\_ sex offender” raises concerns about your contact with our congregation’s children, youth, and families with children. This Limited Access Agreement is designed to reduce the risk to our congregation of a sexual offense, and to you of an accusation.

We, the leadership of First UU, welcome you into our congregation with limitations on your participation and areas of access (out of our concern for our children and youth).

You are welcome and encouraged to participate in adult worship services, coffee hour, adult committee meetings, adult education, all adult-focused social events – provided that you avoid all contact with children on First UU property, and elsewhere at congregation-sponsored events. Avoiding contact includes, but is not limited to:

1. Not talking with children.
2. Not volunteering or agreeing to lead, chaperone or participate in events for children and youth, including such things as LifeSpan Faith Development (LFD) classes, stories or lessons, youth group events, intergenerational events, driving or otherwise transporting children and/or youth.
3. Not being in the LFD classrooms when children or youth are present for any reason.
4. Not being in the presence of children or in a restroom at First UU unless you are accompanied by an adult member of First UU who is aware of this Limited Access Agreement.
5. If you are attending a function at which others are wearing name tags, you will do likewise.
6. If a child of the congregation approaches you, you will politely and immediately excuse yourself from the situation.

In addition, we ask that you not knowingly accept rides from, or visit the homes of, congregation families where children are likely to be present.

By signing this Limited Access Agreement:

A. You accept that the congregation, specific people, and/or organizations that use the First UU building/facility, may be told of your history as a sex offender, in order for them to reduce perceived risk to the children and young people who attend, visit, or are members of First UU.

B. You also give permission for the Minister, LFDD or someone acting at their request, to speak with your treatment provider(s) in order to better plan for your involvement at First UU.

I have reviewed this agreement and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand and agree that if I violate this agreement, I will not be welcome at First UU, and will be denied access to First UU's building and grounds, and to future First UU functions.

I understand that First UU and I may mutually agree to review this contract from time to time. Notwithstanding, this contract, or a signed revision of it, will remain in effect for an indefinite period.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Society President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Minister: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

LFD Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, hereby specifically release and authorize my treatment provider(s) to speak with First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse's Minister, Lifespan Faith Development Director, or someone acting at their request, without separate or further release. Notwithstanding, if any such further release is required, I will provide it upon request.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Date



\* Contact information for all correctional and treatment providers. These include, but are not limited to:

**Please provide name (s) and phone numbers:**

**Parole/Probation Officer:**

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**Physicians/Therapist(s):**

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**Social Worker(s):**

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# APPENDIX 11

## Accident/Incident Report

**Accident/Incident Report (1 Page)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of affected person: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorities contact?      YES      NO      NA

If yes, who? \_\_\_\_\_

Activity during incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location where incident occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

How did incident occur? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was present? \_\_\_\_\_

What could be done to prevent future similar incident or improve response procedures? \_\_\_\_\_

Person completing the report:

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

LFD Director or LFD Committee Member:

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX 12

## Fire Safety Checklist

**Fire Safety Checklist – Arson Prevention (5 Pages)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Person Completing Checklist:** \_\_\_\_\_

OK	Needs Work	Safety Item
		Maintain adequate exterior lighting to eliminate hiding places.
		Use motion detection lights to alert neighbors of activity.
		Put interior lighting on sequential timers to give the impression of occupancy and activity.
		Trim or remove shrubbery that blocks the view of entries into the building.
		Trim tree branches that might allow second story access.
		Store ladders properly to prevent easy access to the rear social hall outdoor landing.
		Install deadbolt locks with a minimum one-inch throw on all outside doors (confirm what building codes permit).
		Keep all doors (including interior offices and closets) locked when unattended.
		Install locks on all basement/fellowship hall, ground floor and second story windows.
		Make sure valuable items are not visible from the outside.
		Keep track of keys.
		Change locks periodically.
		Remove and secure gasoline and other fuel sources from inside and around the building.
		Request patrols by local police, especially if there has been arson activity in your community.
		Establish a neighborhood watch program. Notify law enforcement authorities of suspicious activity — do not confront suspects yourself.

**Fire Safety Checklist – Arson Prevention(5 Pages)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Person Completing Checklist: \_\_\_\_\_

OK	Needs Work	Safety Item
		All exit doors should open outwards with no locks or fasteners to prevent free escape from the inside of the building. Install panic hardware on exit doors.
		Keep exits free of obstruction at all times.
		All exits should be clearly marked with lighted signs.
		Have any remodeling, additions or repairs inspected by the fire marshal for compliance with local fire codes.
		If the building is undergoing repairs, remodeling or painting, make sure workers are following fire safety procedures. For example, blowtorches and painter’s rags can be fire hazards.
		Have furnaces cleaned and professionally inspected once a year. Late summer or early fall is the best time, before the heating season.
		The walls and ceiling of the furnace room should be lined with a fire-resistant material such as concrete block or fire code sheetrock.
		The furnace room door should be lined with a fire-resistant material or be replaced with a UL-approved fire door.
		Keep the furnace room door closed at all times.
		Prevent birds’ nests from chimneys by installing wire mesh across openings.
		Keep chimneys clean, free of soot and other obstructions.

**Fire Safety Checklist – Arson Prevention(5 Pages)**  
**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Person Completing Checklist: \_\_\_\_\_

OK	Needs Work	Safety Item
		Be careful with combustible decorations, especially around holidays. Keep flimsy paper and cloth decorations away from light bulbs, wiring and other sources of heat or flame.
		Make sure all upholstery, draperies and furnishings are fire-retardant fabrics.
		Use care with candles during services (consider use of safe candle-type light bulbs for younger ages in LFD).
		In LFD classes, candles and lamp oils should be used with fire-retardant rugs. Candles and lamp oils should be stored in a metal cabinet.
		Turn off organ when not in use. If left on, the motor can overheat or short out, causing a serious fire hazard.
		First UU is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is permitted outdoors. Check safety ashtray for smoldering ashes or matches.
		Clean up debris from social gatherings on the same day and place in proper receptacles outside of the building.
		Don't use the heating room for storage of combustibles.
		Any gasoline or gasoline-operated equipment on the premises should be stored in a well-vented, fire-resistive enclosure.
		Keep kitchen ventilating hood filters and fans clean and free of accumulated grease.
		Kitchen stove burners should be maintained in good condition. They should ignite as soon as the gas is turned on.
		Look for places where a fire might start — in piles of old rags or overloaded electrical sockets, for example.
		<b>Maintain minimum inventories of flammable liquids and gases.</b>
		<b>Confirm if fire lanes at church entrances are open at all times.</b>

**Fire Safety Checklist – Arson Prevention(5 Pages)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Person Completing Checklist:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OK</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Safety Item</b>
		Review fuse box to be sure of proper size fuse for each circuit and identification of the circuit on the fuse box cover.  Install double pole arc fault circuit interrupters to prevent electrical arcing.
		Inspect all electrical cords and extension cords now in use. Remove any frayed, cracked or dried out cords.
		See that all junction boxes and switch boxes are properly covered.
		Check all major appliances — refrigerators, water coolers, stoves, air conditioners, etc. — for proper connections and grounding.
		Make sure all wall sockets and light switches are equipped with face plates.
		Smoke detectors should be cleaned and tested regularly. If detectors contain batteries, replace them as recommended by the manufacturer or at least twice a year.
		Extension cords should be used as temporary electric power only, not long-term.



**Fire Safety Checklist – Arson Prevention(5 Pages)**

**First Unitarian Universalist Society of Syracuse**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Person Completing Checklist:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>OK</b>	<b>Needs Work</b>	<b>Safety Item</b>
		Extinguishers should be in conspicuous, easy-to-reach locations. There should be no more than 75 feet of travel to reach an extinguisher.
		The top of any heavy extinguisher should not be more than five feet above the floor.
		Operating instructions must be clearly legible. If an extinguisher is in a cabinet, place it so that instructions face outward.
		Employees and others regularly in the building should be familiar with operating instructions so no time is wasted reading them during a fire.
		Extinguishers should be inspected monthly by an employee or other trained person. Keep a record of each inspection.
		Take corrective action if there are any signs of tampering or damage.
		Have a professional inspect or recharge each extinguisher annually, and hydrostatically test them periodically. Each inspection, recharge and test should be noted on a tag attached to the extinguisher.
		Conduct annual training on extinguisher operation.

# APPENDIX 13

## Resources

## **Resources**

### **New York Resources**

#### **Office of Children & Family Services**

Toll free hotline (7 days/24 hrs) to report child abuse and neglect: 1-800-342-3720 or 1-315-422-9701 (paid call)

#### **New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence**

Phone: 518-482-5465; English: 1-800-942-6906; English TTY: 1-800-818-0656; Spanish: 1-800-942-6908; Spanish TTY: 1-800-780-7660

### **Onondaga County Resources**

#### **Office of Child Welfare**

John H. Mulroy Civic Center

421 Montgomery Street

Syracuse, NY 13202

Hours: 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM (Monday – Friday)

Phone: 315-435-2884

#### **New Directions Rape Crisis & Sexual Assault Services**

Vera House

Ellen Ford

Clinical Director

315-425-0818 ext 206

#### **Vera House 24 Crisis Hotline for victims of sexual or domestic violence**

315-422-7273

### **General Information about Child Sexual Abuse**

#### **Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence**

206-634-1903

[www.cpsdv.org](http://www.cpsdv.org)

#### **ChildHelp USA - National Child Abuse Hotline**

1-800-4-A Child

Hotline is staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week.

[www.childhelpusa.org](http://www.childhelpusa.org)

#### **National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

800-fy1-3366

[www.calib.com/nccanch](http://www.calib.com/nccanch) doesn't work

#### **Prevent Child Abuse America**

Formerly National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse

800-CHILDREN

[www.childabuse.org](http://www.childabuse.org)

STOP IT NOW!!

1-888-Prevent

[www.stopitnow.org](http://www.stopitnow.org)

(Their comprehensive resource guide includes a more extensive list of resources than are presented here.)

## **Resources-continued**

### **Information about Sex Offenders**

#### **Center for Sex Offender Management**

301-589-9393

[www.csom.org](http://www.csom.org)

#### **National Adolescent Perpetration Network**

Kempe Children's Center

303-864-5300

<http://www.kempe.org>

#### **Safer Society Foundation, Inc.**

802-247-3132

[www.saferociety.org](http://www.saferociety.org)

For Referral to a Treatment Provider for an Assessment

#### **The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)**

503-643-1023

[www.atsa.com](http://www.atsa.com)

#### **National Council on Sexuality Addiction and Compulsivity**

770-541-9912

[www.ncsac.org](http://www.ncsac.org)

#### **Support for Congregants**

Parents Anonymous

1-800-339-6993

#### **Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network**

800-656-HOPE

[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

#### **Sexual Assault Recovery Anonymous**

410-584-2626

#### **Survivors of Incest Anonymous**

410-893-3322

[www.siaawso.org](http://www.siaawso.org)

#### **Voices in Action (Support for victims of incest and child sexual abuse)**

PO Box 13

Newtonsville, OH 45158

1-800-7-Voice-8

[www.voices-action.org](http://www.voices-action.org)